



Creating a healthier Southern York County

Choose To Be Healthy is a Healthy Maine Partnership and Drug Free Communities Coalition focusing on tobacco, obesity and substance abuse prevention. We serve the Southern York County towns of Berwick, Eliot, Kittery, North Berwick, Lebanon, Ogunquit, South Berwick, Wells, and York. CTBH includes 75+ coalition members and partners representing 8 police departments, 5 school districts, social service agencies, faith community, businesses, health care providers, parents, youth and our lead agency, York Hospital.

CTBH receives funding and support from the Fund for a Healthy Maine, Maine’s Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services and a \$125,000/yr, federal Drug Free Communities Grant (2010-2015) to reduce and prevent youth and young adult substance use and abuse. Coalition staff and members use the latest research, local data, environmental strategies and community collaboration to promote health and prevent substance abuse.

**Choose To Be Healthy Substance Abuse Prevention Work Plan includes:**

**Supporting Law Enforcement**

Funding and support to help enforce underage drinking and drug laws, provide detail coordination and training for regional Police Enforcement Team

**Educating Businesses**

Training and resources for 200+ restaurants and stores on responsible sales and promotion of alcohol

**Empowering Youth**

Training and support for youth groups, scholarships to annual Maine Youth Action Network Conference, youth led community health projects, CTBH [YOU]th Advisory Board

**Engaging and Supporting Parents**

Information to help parents raise drug free children through social media, newsletters, printed resources and presentations

**Promoting Healthy Norms**

Using traditional and social media to promote education, community assets, positive youth and healthy role modeling

**Supporting School and Community Education**

Community and classroom based educational materials on underage drinking, Rx drug abuse and the harm of marijuana use; training and materials for All Stars, a Middle School substance abuse prevention curriculum

**Building Coalition Capacity to Collaborate and Implement Community Change**

Training and resources to improve our communities’ capacity to collaborate and implement proven prevention strategies

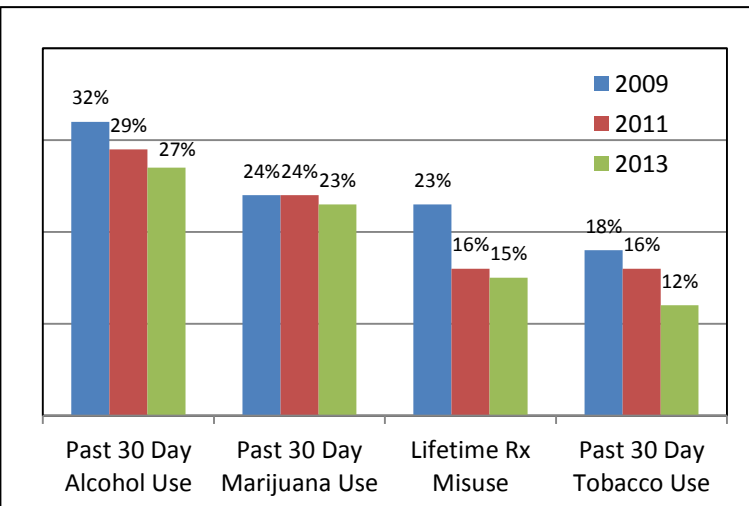
**marijuana**  
**MOST MAINERS DON'T USE**

Most Maine adults (93%) do NOT use marijuana.

Most Maine high school students (78%) do NOT use marijuana.

(Sources: National Survey on Drug Use, 2012; Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey, 2013)

**Choose To Be Healthy COALITION**  
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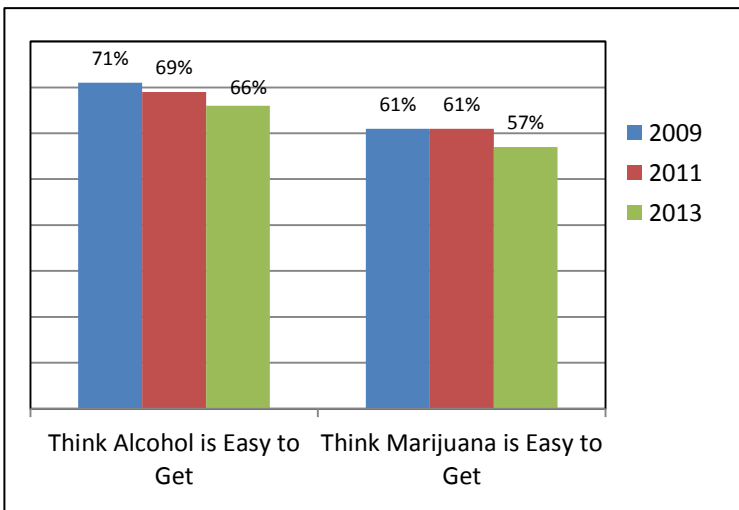
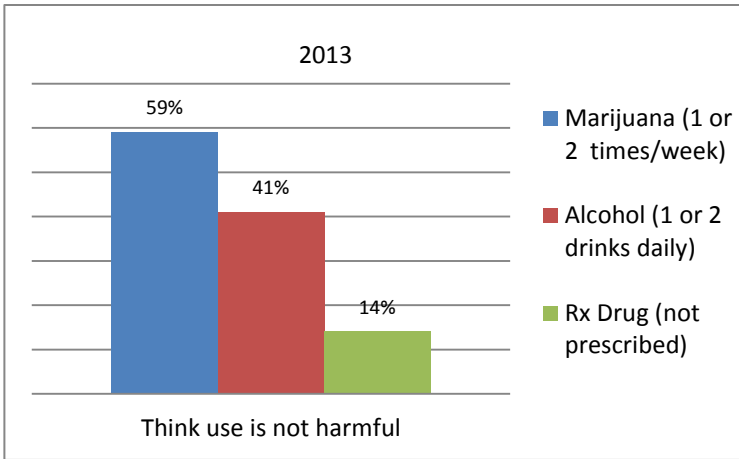
***The Impact of Collaboration on Substance Abuse in York County, 9-12<sup>th</sup> Grades***

- Youth alcohol use has decreased significantly.
- Marijuana use has remained steady despite national, state and local efforts to normalize behavior and increase access.
- Prescription drug misuse has decreased dramatically, coinciding with increased efforts at the state and local level to restrict access and educate the public.

## Perception of Harm and Access: A Continuing Challenge

Prevention research teaches us that youth who have easy access to a substance or do not think it is harmful are more likely to use and abuse.

- Most youth (59%) think daily alcohol use *is* harmful; an improvement from previous years, with more work to do.
- 14% of youth do not think using prescription drugs without a prescription is harmful.
- Most youth (59%) do *not* think smoking marijuana twice a week is harmful.
- Fortunately, youth think alcohol is harder to get.
- However, most youth (57%) still think marijuana is easy to get. This percentage may be higher in 2015 if access increases.



## Highlights of 2014

- 75 restaurants and stores were trained in responsible alcohol service and sales or received signs and materials to help prevent underage access and high risk drinking.
- CTBH coordinated funding, training and promotion of Tipsoft, an anonymous school and community tip line, for 2 police departments covering 4 communities and 2 school districts.
- Over 2,500 parents received information via social media, newsletter, school presentations and open houses on raising alcohol and drug free youth.
- Two Drug Take Back Days resulted in collection of app. 2000 pounds of unused drugs in a collaboration of local police, national DEA, York Hospital, nursing homes, local businesses, and Choose To Be Healthy staff and members.
- CTBH collaborated with York schools to create an online "Safe Homes" Parent Directory for parents who want to be in touch with others who restrict youth access to alcohol and drugs in their homes.
- 150+ people attended three educational forums on public health effects of marijuana, lessons learned from Colorado and a presentation by Maine's Medical Marijuana Enforcement.
- CTBH coordinated a media campaign that included a series of ads on the harm of marijuana use, posters for schools, and a YouTube video on the public health and safety affects of marijuana use viewed by 300+.
- An online newspaper, Keeping ME Above the Influence, was created to update subscribers with the latest news in substance abuse and prevention.



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Visit us at [www.ctbh.org](http://www.ctbh.org). Follow us on Facebook at Southern Maine Healthy Parents Network, the Maine Voice (for youth) and Choose To Be Healthy.

Watch our videos on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/user/ChooseToBeHealthy>.

Check out our online newspaper at <http://paper.li/KeepMEAbove/1402927208>.